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SOCIALISM TODAY



A REPLY TO
TIME
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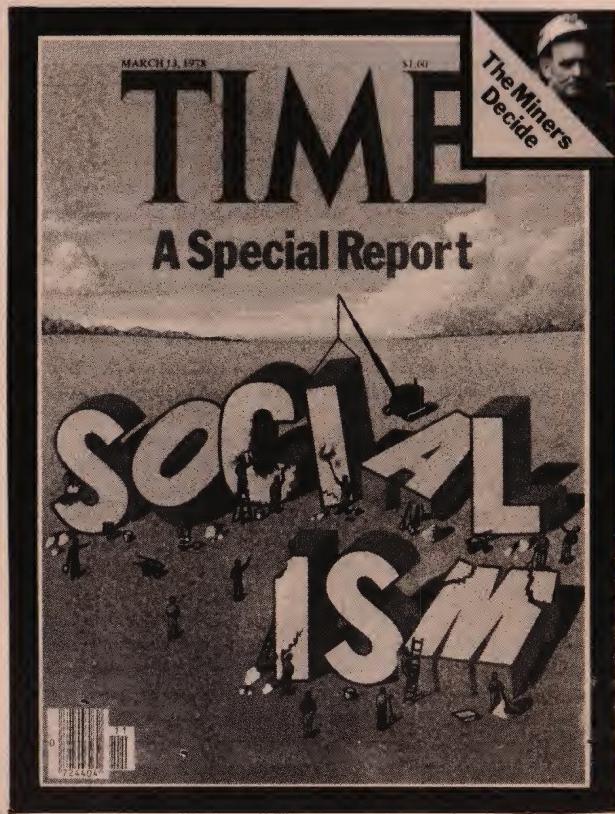
SOCIALISM TODAY

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When people speak of ideas that revolutionize society
they do but express the fact that within the old society
the elements of a new one have been created,
and that the dissolution of the old ideas keeps even pace
with the dissolution of the old conditions of existence.

—The Communist Manifesto



Cover of Time magazine, March 13, 1978.

1. Time's Version of Socialism

"Socialism" has made the cover of Time magazine.

In its March 13, 1978 issue, one of the nation's major newsmagazines devoted its main story to "a special report" on "Socialism: an ideology that promises more than it delivers."

The Time report is a combination of popular myths, deliberate distortions and time-worn capitalist propaganda that typifies the kind of misinformation people in the U.S. are fed about socialist ideas and history. But it will nonetheless be widely read across the nation and used by scores of high school civics teachers in their current events classes. For this reason alone it merits a close look.

Anti-Communism's "New Look"

Right from the outset, there are a few points about the tone and packaging of the Time report that will strike some readers as new. Unlike the anti-communist propaganda of the '50s, the Time report isn't presented in the old cold war, free world vs. totalitarianism framework. Though its purpose is still the same—to discredit socialism in the eyes of Time's readers—the pitch has been refined.

Even the obligatory map showing the "spread of socialism since World War II" has a different look. In the '50s one was used to seeing the blackened "slave countries" of the Soviet bloc creeping outward from Moscow like a plague, while the "free world states" threw up lines of defense. Today, Time shows a more complex division into "capitalist, social democratic,

Marxist-Leninist and third world socialist" nations. There are also supposedly "more objective" comparisons of income statistics, quality of life indexes and "political freedom" ratings (although the objectivity of these guides can be judged from the fact that Time found Chile, South Africa and Iran many times "more free" than, for example, Cuba or newly independent Mozambique).

The changed tone is also reflected in the subtitle: "An ideology that promises more than it delivers." Instead of a crusading call to "roll back the red tide," socialism is criticized mainly for not living up to its own ideals. Appealing to the widespread cynicism and pessimism that mark the '70s, Time's editors imply all social systems are pretty bad and nothing much can be done about the world's problems. Socialism's main crime, they suggest, is that "it makes far greater claims and far more sweeping promises than capitalism does."

While these propaganda changes may seem less than earth-shaking, they do reflect real developments. The anti-communist ideological crusade of the '50s was based on unprecedented capitalist economic prosperity and U.S. imperialist supremacy around the globe. In the past decade, both of these foundations have been shaken and adjustments are necessary to bring the system's popular ideology up to date.

Today, Time must contend with the attraction of socialism, not only in the Soviet bloc or the undeveloped third world, but in the birthplace of capitalism itself. The rise of mass political movements under the socialist banner in countries like France, Italy, Portugal and Spain are unmistakable proof that dissatisfaction with capitalism, not communist conspiracy, is at the root of the "socialist phenomenon." "What gives socialist rhetoric much of its current appeal," Time is forced to admit, "is the economic battering the world's economy has taken in

the 1970s." The editors' concern that this crisis is leading to a rebirth of the socialist movement is detectable throughout the report.

Moreover, while the capitalist world is gripped by social crisis, the "communist world" has changed as well. The "monolithic communist bloc"—a necessary boogeyman for the anti-communist crusade—has been irreparably shattered. Headed by the Sino-Soviet split, nationalist rivalries among the Communist Party states have grown sharper and deeper. There has been a steep decline in Moscow's influence over the CPs in Western Europe as they pursue a reformist, electoral road to power. And the rise of indigenous national liberation movements often indebted to, but not always controlled by, the CP states has created another element and center of "socialist influence." Finally, the pursuit of big power detente has created ties between "communist" and capitalist powers that make them closer allies on some matters than they are with members of their own "bloc"—for example, the U.S. and China on foreign policy.

All this has forced a readjustment in the ways capitalist analysts view the world, including the influence of "socialism." It's these changes that lie behind Time's declaration that "socialism has become a word appropriated by so many different champions and causes that it threatens to become meaningless, and a new effort is needed to sort it out."

Time's Version of History

Time proceeds to survey the state of "world socialism" by describing its main trends and examining a few "case studies." It all leads up to the predictable and tired conclusion that socialism doesn't work because of flaws in "human nature." (This is a time-honored capitalist argument that Time indiscriminately dumps in the last paragraph when it's pulling out the stops.) It would be impossible to point

up all the misstatements dropped along the way, but the main sources of distortion in the "special report" can be located in the very approach it takes toward its subject.

Time does not treat socialism and capitalism as historically conditioned social movements with centuries of development behind them. Nor does it treat social systems themselves as creatures of history that rise and fall, develop and decline—all the while taking ruling classes with them—in a never-ending process of historical change.

Instead, Time treats socialism and capitalism as mere "conceptions" or "ideals" about how societies should be run. It discusses their fate as if whole societies actually went out shopping in the "marketplace of ideas" and came home with a blueprint to put into operation. The face of today's globe is not explained as the outcome of decades of fierce class struggles, wars, revolutions, famines and depressions, but as the sum total of various types of "social experiments."

Similarly, socialism is treated as an ideology or a new type of religion, which sprang up out of people's heads for largely unexplained reasons. For instance, Time begins its account of socialism with this description of its origins:

"It began as an outcry against 'the dark satanic mills' of early capitalism, a shuddering reaction against the profound upheavals caused by the Industrial Revolution, a reassertion of the utopian dream of the heavenly kingdom on earth. It sprang from obscure clubs, from workers' associations, from garrets, libraries, bourgeois parlors and, occasionally, aristocratic salons. It was hounded, reviled, extolled. It became the most pervasive political ideology—or slogan—of the 20th century. Socialism."

The Time report never gets beyond such pulp melodrama to explain where socialism really came

from or what it represented. Thus, the entire "special report" is further permeated with a totally ahistorical, unreal quality (a quality that is characteristic of much of American popular consciousness).

Yet without a solid understanding of modern socialism's origins, it is impossible to understand its fate in the 20th century.

Roots of Modern Socialism

Historically, the rise of modern socialism represented the appearance of a large class of wage-laborers in society. The proletariat was first created on a massive social scale by the industrial revolution of the late 18th and 19th centuries. As the capitalist mode of production developed, the size and social weight of the working class grew dramatically. Its key role in the process of production enhanced its importance, while the exploited and oppressed conditions of its existence placed it in revolutionary opposition to the status quo. Socialism was the expression both of this proletariat's emergence on the social stage and of its interest in abolishing its exploited status by transforming society. In short, above all else, modern socialism reflected the standpoint of a particular social grouping — the working class.

However, as one of the co-founders of modern socialism, Frederick Engels, noted, every new movement must hook up with existing "intellectual material." Thus, while historically modern socialism reflected a concrete material development—the rise of an industrial proletariat in the capitalist societies—theoretically, socialism took the form of a critical extension of existing theory in several areas.

This was accomplished largely through the work of Karl Marx, who put socialism on the firm theoretical foundations that give it the character of a social science. It was Marx who assimilated the impact of the

industrial revolution and the rise of the proletariat and carried over their implications into systematic critiques of the highest products of bourgeois thought. The new world outlook of the proletariat was expressed in Marx's theoretical critiques of German philosophy (represented by the work of Hegel), English political economy (Adam Smith, David Ricardo), and utopian socialism (Charles Fourier, Henri de Saint-Simon and Robert Owen).

Out of this work came the theories of modern socialism. The materialist conception of history explained historical development as a process of class struggle conditioned by developments in the mode of production. The Marxist analysis of capitalism, with its theory of value and surplus value, explained the exploitation of wage labor and the laws of motion of the capitalist economy. And finally, Marx and Engels laid the foundations of a revolutionary theory of social transformation which explained the proletariat's role and class interest in replacing capitalism with a classless, stateless, cooperative association of the producers, i.e., socialism. These theoretical achievements were all marked by the application of Marx's dialectical method, which described a world in a constant process of movement and change, shaped by a complex network of interrelationships.

All this is a closed book to the editors of Time and their special report on socialism. Marx is given one paragraph and turned into a parody. Instead of a man who revolutionized social thought, he is presented as a liberal moralist "who framed the classic socialist indictment of capitalism, accusing (!) it of turning labor into a commodity and thus exploiting and dehumanizing workers while it enriches bourgeois owners." This is the extent of Time's explanation of the roots of the socialist movement and the basis upon which it arrives at similar "insights" about socialism in today's world.

2. Socialism Today

Time magazine's "special report" on the current state of socialism essentially amounts to a rehash of what various nationalist generals, reformist politicians and state bureaucrats have to say on the subject. Its effort to work out the tendencies in "world socialism" is little more than a survey of various foreign governments as seen through the eyes of one of U.S. capitalism's popular news sheets. Like its description of the initial rise of socialism, Time's account of "Marxist-Leninist, social democratic and third world socialisms" is totally devoid of either class analysis or historical perspective.

As noted above, the modern socialism expressed in the theories of Karl Marx reflected concrete social developments which occurred at a definite point in history. Socialism was the movement of a particular social group—wage laborers—whose class interests impelled it toward a revolutionary reorganization of those societies which had reached a relatively high level of development, based on advanced capitalist productive forces.

From this it followed that where neither a large class of socialized wage laborers nor advanced productive forces existed, the possibilities for socialism were limited. Yet one of the dominant features of the last century has been the adoption of "socialist ideology" by governments and movements which do not represent the proletariat or have an advanced industrial base. This has given rise to all kinds of non-Marxist

"socialisms" and something akin to a Tower of Babel confusion.

To be sure, the appropriation of "socialism" by social forces other than the proletariat is not new. Proletarian socialism has always had to contend with varieties of "socialism" representing other classes. In fact, the third section of Marx and Engels' famous *Communist Manifesto* is given over entirely to distinguishing proletarian socialism from the efforts of the petty bourgeoisie, the aristocracy and others to cloak their interests in socialist labels.

A similar survey of the countries calling themselves socialist today would have to do the same—that is, identify the "socialism" in question with the class interests it reflects. Each of these "socialisms" can only be understood as the product of a struggle between specific classes in concrete historical circumstances. And all of them exist in a world where no proletariat has succeeded in establishing a classless, socialist society or direct working-class rule.

Communist Party Rule

The first "variant" Time identifies is "Marxism-Leninism," by which it means all the countries ruled by CP states. Though virtually all of these regimes arose in the wake of fierce civil war, in many cases bound up with the first or second imperialist world war, Time treats them as if they had been dropped from the sky. They are said to be the product of "a secular religion" (i.e., Marxist-Leninist ideology) with "a dogmatic determination to abolish private property."

This "analysis" reflects only Time's horror at the thought of the abolition of capitalist property rights, which has indeed taken place in the CP countries. But it says nothing about the class nature of these societies or their relation to a classless, socialist society.

There have been significant differences in the type of class conflict that led to the establishment of the CP states. In the Soviet Union, there was an authentic attempt at proletarian revolution before bureaucratic rule was consolidated. In Yugoslavia, partisan united front struggle against the Nazi occupation combined with the victory of Stalin's Red Army to defeat capitalism. In other East European nations, Stalin's army and bureaucratic decree reorganized society in Moscow's image from the top down.

In China, a peasant revolution—in which the small Chinese working class played a very subsidiary role—led to the expulsion of imperial rule and the establishment of the present CP state. In Indochina as well, predominantly rural, peasant-based struggles led to national revolution and CP rule.

However in Cuba, where the social transformation also took the form of an anti-imperialist struggle, the revolution was led by the radical intelligentsia and democratic petty bourgeoisie. The Cuban revolution went over to Marxist-Leninist forms only after its victory.

Yet despite these different origins, the social systems that emerged in these countries do have common features. Above all, the proletariat has not emerged victorious in any of them. In each case, the working class proved too small or too weak to successfully organize its direct rule over society and establish socialism. At the same time, the bourgeoisie was too weak or too compromised by its imperialist ties to erect a classic capitalist system.

Instead a new form of social organization arose. All of the systems displayed common tendencies toward the formation of bureaucratic ruling classes, based on state property, which rule through a political monopoly of the combined party-state apparatus. In none of these societies does the working class manage the economy or exercise political self-government. Instead

of the state "withering away" and class privilege being abolished, massive police apparatuses remain and social stratification is built into the bureaucratic system.

The bureaucratic ruling classes in these countries drape their rule in the flag of a once-revolutionary ideology, Marxism-Leninism, making whatever revisions are necessary to legitimize their regimes as "socialist." By emphasizing the statist, party-centered tendencies in Leninist thought and history, while gutting its revolutionary aspects, the statist ruling classes manufacture endless ideological defenses for their system. But this ideology has no more in common with Marxian socialism than a repressive bureaucratic society has with the free, cooperative association of producers which Marx envisioned.

Socialism and the Third World

Under "third world socialism," Time lumps such systems as the "Islamic socialism" of Algeria, the semi-military regime in Syria, and the post-colonialist government in Tanzania. In none of these countries does anything resembling proletarian socialism exist. The fact that these nations are trying to overcome semi-feudal conditions by more or less centralizing military, economic and political power in state hands does not constitute a socialist reorganization of society.

Most third world "socialisms" are either repressive military regimes which use socialist rhetoric to mask their despotism, or victorious nationalist independence movements which, after decades or centuries of imperialist exploitation, are attempting to construct modern national economies for the first time.

A number of the latter countries are making significant strides over the conditions of imperialist oppression—and weakening world capitalism in the

process. But even in the most progressive, the material prerequisites for socialism are lacking. Without the support of a socialist revolution in one or more countries in the West, which could liberate advanced productive forces from capitalist control and open the possibilities of a real socialist development, the newly independent nations will be more and more forced to develop along neo-colonialist lines, or head down the path toward bureaucratic class rule. "Third world socialism" has found no escape from this dilemma.

Social Democracy

Finally, Time's survey identifies "social democracy" as the "most liberal version of socialism." This is no doubt because social democracy most closely resembles capitalism. In fact, the social democratic countries of Scandinavia and Western Europe are not socialist at all, but are capitalist and, for the most part, imperialist powers. Their "mixed economies" maintain capitalist property and market relations with the help of extensive state intervention to stage off crises. The "socialist" color of these capitalist societies stems mainly from a high level of reformist and social welfare measures instituted to allay social tensions.

In one sense, European social democracy reflects the fact that, traditionally, Europe has seen a high level of class struggle by the proletariat. Social democracy is essentially a class collaborationist partnership between capital and the "representatives" of the working class. It is a reformist effort to stabilize a society wracked beneath the surface by class tensions and conflicts.

However, reformist class collaboration is inherently unstable and generally succeeds only in times of relatively high capitalist prosperity. In "hard times" like those now sweeping Europe, social democratic rule breaks down. In such periods, society can move in either revolutionary or reactionary directions, and the

hope transparently expressed in the Time report is that the European working class won't move from reformist "socialism" toward the real thing.

Proletarian Socialism

It is not at all difficult to highlight, as Time does, the respective failures of social democracy, third worldism or Stalinism. But this in no way discredits proletarian socialism (nor does it make the era of capitalist decline more bearable).

The bastardized Marxism-Leninism of the CP states is the "socialism" of new bureaucratic ruling classes.

Third world socialism is the "socialism" of military tyrants or nationalist governments.

Social democracy is the "socialism" of the reformist bourgeoisie and its labor lieutenants who dominate the workers' movements in the West.

The failure of any of these "socialist" movements to institute the classless, stateless society and realize the goals of socialism merely confirms Marx's contention that only the proletariat itself could accomplish such a task. There is no social force or "leadership" that can substitute for the self-organization of the mass of workers.

This premise was also the basis of a major contribution to socialist theory made by the American socialist Daniel De Leon (1852-1914). De Leon was one of the first to build on the original conceptions of Marx and Engels, and on the ever-expanding level of industrialization evident in the U.S. at the turn of the century, to project a program of revolutionary transformation consistent with the socialist goal.

De Leon's ideas, which came to be summed up in the socialist industrial union program, called for the political and economic organization of the working class to accomplish a specific set of revolutionary objectives. Politically, he held that the proletariat needed a classwide political party to educate and

gather revolutionary forces and to mount an attack on the centralized state power of the ruling class. Economically, De Leon projected a network of classwide industrial unions which would unite all members of the working class into a powerful body capable of mobilizing their decisive social power at the point of production.

These socialist industrial unions were to be organized along the lines of the modern economy they would eventually seek to control. Unlike craft unions, they would unite all workers in each industry and then integrate all the industries at the local, regional and national levels. The principles of workers' democracy—i.e., immediate recall of all representatives, abolition of bureaucratic privileges, etc.—would ensure that these bodies remained in the hands of the rank and file.

De Leon placed these revolutionary socialist unions at the heart of his program for overthrowing capitalism. The SIUs would be the fundamental force for mobilizing the productive power of the workers in the struggle against capitalism. They would supply the basic social and economic power needed to appropriate the capitalist class. They would also constitute the ultimate source of all authority in the revolutionary struggle.

At the same time, the SIUs were also intended to serve as the building blocks of future socialist society. As a united network of producers equipped to manage production cooperatively and democratically, De Leon maintained, the SIUs were alone suited for the primary tasks of socialist government. They were the foundation on which a classless, stateless socialist society could be brought into existence.

By struggling to build the SIU structure, the revolutionary movement could bind the workers into a classconscious force. By struggling to make the SIUs the foundation of future society, the workers could

erect a system that would allow them to retain direct, democratic control of the vital process of social production. De Leon summed up his conception with the slogan: "Industrial unionism is the socialist republic in the making; and the goal once reached, the industrial union is the socialist republic in operation."

Today this program remains the one most consistent with the aims and objectives of the founders of modern socialism. And as surely as each day of capitalist decline moves the working class toward another upsurge in revolutionary struggle, so too does each experience with a spurious variety of socialism contribute to a rebirth of the socialist movement on the basis of its original principle of self-emancipation.

Engels on the Rise of Socialism

The following excerpt is from Frederick Engels' famous pamphlet, "Socialism: From Utopia to Science." Its explanation of the origins and rise of modern socialism is a sharp contrast to the popular distortions found in Time magazine's "special report" on socialism.

Since the historical appearance of the capitalist mode of production, the appropriation by society of all the means of production has often been dreamed of, more or less vaguely, by individuals, as well as by sects, as the ideal of the future. But it could become possible, could become a historical necessity, only when the actual conditions for its realization were there. Like every other social advance, it becomes practicable, not by men understanding that the existence of classes is in contradiction to justice, equality, etc., not by the mere willingness to abolish these classes, but by virtue of certain new economic conditions. The separation of society into an exploiting and an exploited class, a ruling and an oppressed class, was the necessary consequence of the deficient and restricted development of production of former times. So long as the total social labor only yields a produce which but slightly exceeds that barely necessary for the existence of all; so long, therefore, as labor engages all or almost all the time of the great majority of the members of society—so long, of necessity, this society is divided into classes. Side by

side with the great majority, exclusively bond slaves to labor, arises a class freed from directly productive labor, which looks after the general affairs of society; the direction of labor, state business, law, science, art, etc. It is, therefore, the law of division of labor that lies at the basis of the division into classes. But this does not prevent this division into classes from being carried out by means of violence and robbery, trickery and fraud. It does not prevent the ruling class, once having the upper hand, from consolidating its power at the expense of the working class, from turning its social leadership into an intensified exploitation of the masses.

But if, upon this showing, division into classes has a certain historical justification, it has this only for a given period, only under given social conditions. It was based upon the insufficiency of production. It will be swept away by the complete development of modern productive forces. And, in fact, the abolition of classes in society presupposes a degree of historical evolution, at which the existence, not simply of this or that particular ruling class, but of any ruling class at all, and, therefore, the existence of class distinction itself has become an obsolete anachronism. It presupposes, therefore, the development of production carried out to a degree at which appropriation of the means of production and of the products, and, with this, of political domination, of the monopoly of culture, and of intellectual leadership by a particular class of society, has become not only superfluous, but economically, politically, intellectually a hindrance to development.

This point is now reached. Their political and intellectual bankruptcy is scarcely any longer a secret to the bourgeoisie themselves. Their economic bankruptcy recurs regularly every ten years. In every crisis, society is suffocated beneath the weight of its own productive forces and products, which it cannot

use, and stands helpless face to face with the absurd contradiction that the producers have nothing to consume, because consumers are wanting. The expansive force of the means of production bursts the bonds that the capitalist mode of production had imposed upon them. Their deliverance from these bonds is the one precondition for an unbroken, constantly accelerated development of the productive forces, and therewith for a practically unlimited increase of production itself. Nor is this all. The socialized appropriation of the means of production does away, not only with the present artificial restrictions upon production, but also with the positive waste and devastation of productive forces and products that are at the present time the inevitable concomitants of production, and that reach their height in the crises. Further, it sets free for the community at large a mass of means of production and of products, by doing away with the senseless extravagance of the ruling classes of today, and their political representatives. The possibility of securing for every member of society, by means of socialized production, an existence not only fully sufficient materially, and becoming day by day more full, but an existence guaranteeing to all the free development and exercise of their physical and mental faculties—this possibility is now for the first time here, but *it is here*.

With the seizing of the means of production by society, production of commodities is done away with, and, simultaneously, the mastery of the product over the producer. Anarchy in social production is replaced by systematic, definite organization. The struggle for individual existence disappears. Then for the first time, man, in a certain sense, is finally marked off from the rest of the animal kingdom, and emerges from mere animal conditions of existence into really human ones. The whole sphere of the conditions of life which environ man, and which have hitherto ruled man, now

comes under the domination and control of man, who for the first time becomes the real, conscious lord of nature, because he has now become master of his own social organization. The laws of his own social action, hitherto standing face to face with man as laws of nature foreign to and dominating him, will then be used with full understanding, and so mastered by him. Man's own social organization, hitherto confronting him as a necessity imposed by nature and history, now becomes the result of his own free action. The extraneous objective forces that have hitherto governed history pass under the control of man himself. Only from that time will man himself, more and more consciously, make his own history—only from that time will the social causes set in movement by him have, in the main and in a constantly growing measure, the results intended by him. It is the ascent of man from the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of freedom.

Let us briefly sum up our sketch of historical evolution.

I. *Medieval Society*—Individual production on a small scale. Means of production adapted for individual use; hence primitive, ungainly, petty, dwarfed in action. Production for immediate consumption, either of the producer himself or of his feudal lord. Only where an excess occurs is such excess offered for sale, enters into exchange. Production of commodities, therefore, only in its infancy. But already it contains within itself, in embryo, *anarchy in the production of society at large*.

II. *Capitalist Revolution*—Transformation of industry, at first by means of simple cooperation and manufacture. Concentration of the means of production, hitherto scattered, into great workshops. As a consequence, their transformation from individual to social means of production—a transformation which does not, on the whole, affect the form of ex-

change. The old forms of appropriation remain in force. The capitalist appears. In his capacity as owner of the means of production, he also appropriates the products and turns them into commodities. Production has become a *social act*. Exchange and appropriation continue to be *individual acts*, the acts of individuals. *The social product is appropriated by the individual capitalist*. Fundamental contradiction, whence arise all the contradictions in which our present-day society moves, and which modern industry brings to light, viz:

A. Severance of the producer from the means of production. Condemnation of the worker to wage labor for life. *Antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie*.

B. Growing predominance and increasing effectiveness of the laws governing the production of commodities. Unbridled competition. *Contradiction between socialized organization in the individual factory and social anarchy in production as a whole*.

C. On the one hand, perfecting of machinery, made by competition compulsory for each individual manufacturer, and complemented by a constantly growing displacement of laborers. *Industrial reserve army*. On the other hand, unlimited extension of production, also compulsory under competition, for every manufacturer. On both sides, unheard of development of productive forces, excess of supply over demand, overproduction, glutting of the markets, crises every ten years, the vicious circle; excess here, of means of production and products—excess there, of laborers, without employment and without means of existence. But these two levers of production and of social well-being are unable to work together, because the capitalist form of production prevents the productive forces from working and the products from circulating, unless they are first turned into capital—which their very superabundance prevents. The contradiction has grown into an absurdity. *The mode*

of production rises in rebellion against the form of exchange. The bourgeoisie are convicted of incapacity further to manage their own social productive forces.

D. Partial recognition of the social character of the productive forces forced upon the capitalists themselves. Taking over of the great institutions for production and communication, first by joint-stock companies, later on by trusts, then by the state. The bourgeoisie demonstrated to be a superfluous class. All its social functions are now performed by salaried employees.

III. *Proletarian Revolution*— Solution of the contradictions. The proletariat seizes the public power, and by means of this transforms the socialized means of production, slipping from the hands of the bourgeoisie, into public property. By this act, the proletariat frees the means of production from the character of capital they have thus far borne, and gives their socialized character complete freedom to work itself out. Socialized production upon a predetermined plan becomes henceforth possible. The development of production makes the existence of different classes of society thenceforth an anachronism. In proportion as anarchy in social production vanishes, the political authority of the state dies out. Man, at last the master of his own form of social organization, becomes at the same time the lord over nature, his own master—free.

To accomplish this act of universal emancipation is the historical mission of the modern proletariat. To thoroughly comprehend the historical conditions and thus the very nature of this act, to impart to the now oppressed proletarian class a full knowledge of the conditions and of the meaning of the momentous act it is called upon to accomplish, this is the task of the theoretical expression of the proletarian movement, scientific socialism.

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